

to have assumed a yellowish tint, and have become much harder to the touch than it was before—good indications of an interruption to the circulation of the juices of the plant. If this altered condition be allowed to go on by the plant remaining in the ground, the change of color will rapidly make its way up the stem until it reaches the capsules, and then the seeds will be found to be fully matured, quite hard, and to have assumed the dark color with which we are so familiar in the market samples. The next stage of the plant would be the bursting of the seed vessels and dissection of their contents, but to preserve both seed and fibre, the plant should be harvested at the earlier stage, at which time the fibre is at its best condition. If left until the seeds are quite matured, the stems get hard and woody, and the fibre is apt to get much broken in the subsequent process of separation. Long experience has proved that this is the most profitable time to pull flax.

In order to get the greatest length of fibre, which is a matter of great importance, flax is pulled up by the roots. "The flax is pulled by hand, each singly grasping a small handful carefully by the neck, just below the seed vessels, and drawing it up out of the soil, and laying it in rows across one another. These are allowed to remain lying open on the ground for a certain time, generally one or two days; they are then collected together, and bound into small-sized sheaves or bundles, care being taken that the band shall be placed just under the seed heads of the plant, and the bottoms or butts left unconfined and open. If the crop has been irregular in its growth, and the stems are of unequal lengths, it is desirable, as far as it can be managed, to pull them in different bundles, according to their length, as both its steeping and scutching much fibre is otherwise lost. It is also desirable in binding them, that the butts should be gently pressed on the ground, in order to regulate the length of the different stems. After the sheaves, or "bundles" as they are termed, are bound, they are arranged in small stocks, usually of four, five or six each, placed in a circle, the butts being well spread out, so as to admit the air freely to their centres—the weather, and the condition of the crop when pulled, of course regulating the period they have to remain on the field."

Cultivation of Indian Corn.

The *Boston Cultivator* publishes the following colloquy between farmers A and B:

A. On what kind of land do you raise corn this year, neighbor B?

B. I have planted a part of "the plain," which, you know, is rather light, dry soil.

A. How do you cultivate it—I mean what is the course after planting?

B. It is planted in hills about four feet each way; I plough it and hoe it three times—weeding, half-hilling and hilling. I use the common "horse plough," and make two furrows to the row at each hoeing, working over with a hoe the spaces not plowed. Sometimes I go both ways, but I always intend to plough the second time the contrary way from the first. I am not very particular as to the first and sec-

ond hoeings or ploughings, but at the third I want the plough put down *deep*—no matter how high the corn is—I don't care if it is all tasselled out and is higher than the horse's back.

A. I confess I don't see the advantages of your mode of cultivation over mine. Most of my corn land is similar in character to yours, and I plant my corn in a similar way. I don't use the plough among my corn at all; I use a cultivator, and with that I can work over the surface of the ground, close up to the young corn itself, going twice in a row. This kills the weeds, if it is done at the right time, and sufficiently stirs the ground. It leaves but a narrow strip to be hoed. I have no set number of times to hoe or cultivate my corn—I do it as often as it is required. Something depends on the season: I make it a rule to keep the weeds down, whether it requires two workings or four to do it. If the ground is clean and the surface tolerably light, I do not think it will pay to work it after the corn is a foot high. Then, as to your practice of running a plough deeply between the rows after the corn has fully tasselled out; it cuts off, turns up, and destroys myriads of roots. By the time the stalks have attained the height you speak of, the roots have formed a complete network through the soil from row to row. If you examine closely after you have plowed a furrow, you will see the fine white fibres almost as numerous and close together as the threads in a piece of sheeting. If rain happens soon after you have ploughed, you can see the roots *very* plainly.—Now, why should these roots, which the vital energies of the plant have produced, be destroyed? Is it reasonable to suppose that their destruction can aid the plant in the great object for which it was designed by nature, and which is also the great object of man, viz., *the production of seed*?

B. Well, I don't know about that; but I have raised corn in the way I mention, and am satisfied with it.

A. But did you ever try an experiment fairly, between ploughing deeply between the rows after the corn gets as high as the horse's back, and working over two or three inches of the surface just as the tassel begins to shoot from the sheath, and then *laying the field by*, as they say at the West?

B. No, I never did, because I am satisfied with the way I have adopted. But did you ever try *my* way?

A. Yes, or something very similar to it. I had a field of corn which I intended to finish cultivating, and *lay by* before haying, but was under the necessity of leaving a part of it for a week or ten days after the main portion had been worked over. During this time the ground had become more compact, and the weeds had grown some. The man who was sent to finish up the work thought he could not make the cultivator, which had been used on the other portion of the field, answer for this, and he therefore took a horse-plough, such as you say you use. With this he went through the corn twice to a row, putting the plow pretty well down. It was hoed as the other portion had been, and left till harvest. The